

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Virginia Cave Board  
Saturday, September 11, 2004  
Department of Environmental Quality, Roanoke, Virginia**

**Virginia Cave Board Members Present**

Ms. Barbara L. Moss, Chairman	Dr. John Holsinger
Mr. Bob Barns, Treasurer	Ms. Judy Molnar
Dr. Kurt Buhlmann, Vice Chairman	Ms. Nikki Rovner
Ms Andrea Futrell	
Mr. Roger Kirchen, for the Director of the Virginia Department of Historical Resources	

**Virginia Cave Board Members Not Present**

Dr. David C. Culver  
Mr. Joe Davis  
Mr. Drew Harrison  
Ms. Claire Ward

**Staff Present**

Mr. Joey Fagan  
Mr. Tom Smith  
Mr. Wil Orndorff  
Ms. Carol Zokaite

**Others Present**

Ms Patti Barns	Mr. Gary Moss
Ms. Karen Kastning	Dr. Ernst Kastning

**Call to Order**

Ms. Moss called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and declared a quorum present.

**Introduction and Announcements**

Ms. Moss welcomed members, staff, and guests. All in attendance introduced themselves.

Ms. Moss commended the work of outgoing Cave Board members, Ms. Kastning and Mr. Keith. Ms. Moss presented a special plaque to Ms. Kastning recognizing her 17 years of service to the Virginia Cave Board. A plaque recognizing Mr. Keith's service to the Cave Board has been prepared and will be mailed to him.

### **Election of Officers**

Ms. Moss opened the floor for nominations for officers of the Board. The following slate of officers was chosen by the board:

Chairman: Ms. Barbara Moss  
Vice Chairman: Dr. Kurt Buhlmann  
Treasurer: Mr. Bob Barns

MOTION: Ms. Rovner moved the Board accept the slate of officers as presented.

SECOND: Dr. Holsinger

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes from April 3, 2004**

MOTION: Dr. Buhlmann moved that the minutes of the April 3, 2004 meeting of the Virginia Cave Board be approved as corrected.

SECOND: Dr. Holsinger

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### **Treasurers Report**

Ms. Kastning submitted the Treasurer's report to the Board.

### **Old Business**

### **Education Committee Report**

Ms. Moss discussed the status of updates to the Virginia Cave Board website.

Plans were presented for the 2004 Virginia Cave Week which is being held concurrently with Earth Science Week on October 10 – 16, 2004. Production of the Cave Week educational poster, "The World Beneath Our Feet: Subterranean Life and the Domain Below the Earth" designed by Dr. Culver, was discussed. A page of Internet links to selected lessons and other resources for educators will be posted on the Cave Board

website for Cave Week. Science coordinators at school systems throughout Virginia will be notified about 2004 Virginia Cave Week and associated resources by e-mail.

### **Environmental Response Committee**

Dr. Holsinger outlined several projects with potential environmental impacts that are of interest to the committee. The status of Ogdens Cave and Rust Cave was discussed. Potential impacts to caves and karst as a result of improvements to Route 58 were talked about as were steps being taken by VDOT to minimize some of those impacts. Ms. Kastning reported on plans by Rockydale Quarry to open a new quarry near Fincastle, Virginia that could affect the area's karst.

### **Sinkhole Protection Committee**

Ms. Futrell discussed ways to better protect sinkholes in order to prevent pollution of surface waters and groundwater resources in Virginia's karst. The committee seeks to define the problem, identify stakeholders, and work to implement solutions. Better karst environmental education, better enforcement of existing laws and regulations, promoting voluntary programs such as Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs), and possible passage of new legislation were all discussed as being part of the solution to this serious environmental hazard.

### **Sacrifice Cave Committee**

Dr. Holsinger clarified that high-traffic caves, sometimes referred to as "sacrifice caves," are important resources because they serve a legitimate educational purpose and because they tend to draw traffic away from other more environmentally sensitive caves.

### **Cave Owners Newsletter**

Ms. Kastning reported that 1040 copies of the most recent issue of the Cave Owners Newsletter were mailed. Ms. Kastning noted that this would be the final issue of the newsletter under her editorship. Ms. Moss expressed thanks on behalf of the Board to Karen and Ernst Kastning for serving 14 years as editors of the Cave Owners Newsletter. The assistance of Phil Lucas and the Virginia Speleological Survey in maintaining a mailing list of Virginia cave owners was gratefully acknowledged. Ms. Futrell will serve as the new editor of the Cave Owners Newsletter, and will be working with Mr. Lucas to update the names and address of cave owners for future mailings.

### **Karst Program Report**

Mr. Orndorff made a presentation on "Conservation Sites for Virginia's Rare Cave Fauna and Significant Caves." His presentation explained the importance of cave organisms to the overall biodiversity of Virginia. Ongoing work by the DCR Karst Program will soon result in polygonal representations of occurrences of rare cave organisms as well as development of biodiversity ranks for cave conservation sites. This information will be

used by the DCR Division of Natural Heritage for conservation planning and environmental project review. Mr. Orndorff noted that the ability to assign the correct biodiversity ranking for cave conservation sites is limited due to incomplete information on cave collections and certain cave locations.

Work is underway by the Karst Program to produce a GIS-based Karst Hydrology Atlas for Virginia. The Karst Hydrology Atlas will contain information about known dye-tracing studies performed by various investigators throughout Virginia's karst.

**MOTION:** Dr. Holsinger moved for the Chair to appoint a committee to communicate to any investigator the importance of filing complete reports, including specific location information for all species found to exist in any of Virginia's Caves, the requirement for all data to be disclosed, and the need for all investigators to comply with the terms of their collecting permit.

**SECOND:** Mr. Barns

**DISCUSSION:** It was discussed and agreed that it is critical for persons performing biological investigations in Virginia Caves to provide complete location information on specimen labels and to file complete and timely reports in order to properly document specimens residing in museum collections if these specimens are to be of value to science, and to maintain the integrity of the DCR Division of Natural Heritage Database and thereby serve to better protect Virginia's caves and karst resources.

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Moss appointed a committee to be made up of Dr. Holsinger, Dr. Buhlmann, and Mr. Smith to communicate as required with scientific investigators regarding the complete and timely reporting of data regarding biological surveys in Virginia Caves.

### **Karst Education Report**

Ms. Zokaites explained that knowledge of the development of karst topography is incorporated in Virginia's Standards of Learning; a karst related question is now a part of the Earth Science SOL test. Karst environmental education topics and activities fit well with the Virginia Department of Education's goal to provide a "Meaningful Watershed Experience" for every student. Ms. Zokaites will be making a presentation at the upcoming Children's Groundwater Festival being held September 23, 2004 at Radford University's SELU Conservancy.

### **Sinkhole Protection Committee**

Some discussion of this topic took place during the report of the Sinkhole Protection Committee. It was mentioned that personnel from the Black Diamond Resource Conservation and Development Council are offering their assistance to help work on legislation to protect sinkholes & groundwater supplies for Virginia's karst country.

## **New Business**

### **Brochure presenting erosion and sedimentation issues with sinkholes**

Ms. Kastning presented a draft copy of the brochure by Dr. Kastning, entitled, "Elements of Erosion and Sediment Control in Karst (With Special Reference to Virginia)."

Members of the Board were asked to review the text prior to the December meeting and make suggestions and comments. The board expressed an interest in the brochure. Mr. Smith, Director of the DCR Division of Natural Heritage, said that DCR could probably help with publishing the brochure.

### **Other New Business and Public Comments**

#### Establishment of a Virginia State Bat

Ms. Ward has made legislative contacts and has support for the purpose of establishing a state bat for Virginia. It was agreed that the Virginia big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii virginianus*) would be a good choice for the Virginia State Bat.

**MOTION:** Dr. Holsinger moved for the Virginia Cave Board to support establishing the Virginia big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii virginianus*) as the state bat of Virginia.

**SECOND:** Dr. Buhlmann

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously

### **Set Next Meeting Date**

The following dates and locations were chosen for future meetings of the Virginia Cave Board:

December 4, 2004 at The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Program Office, Charlottesville, Virginia.

March 19, 2005 at a location to be determined at a later time.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Futrell moved the meeting be adjourned. Dr. Buhlmann seconded. Ms. Moss adjourned the meeting at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Barbara L. Moss  
Chairman

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Joseph H. Fagan  
Secretary